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Near East & South Asia

Iran: Prices of Goods, Feb-May

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Iran: Prices of Goods, Feb-May

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***Article Blames Price Increases on Profiteers**

95LA0179E Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 15 Mar 95 p 5

[Article by Mahmud Ashrafi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday coins, today foreign exchange, tomorrow... Loose capital continues to flow in the economy of middlemen. The sum of 55 trillion rials [R] of the nation's currency in circulation, which is equal to half the nation's total gross national product, GNP, has never gone into production. There was no logical reason for the rapid fluctuations in the foreign exchange and coin markets last month, and those markets are the only trail that will lead to the location of the nation's loose capital.

In its most recent measure to put the economic situation in order, the Majles has made extreme decisions on how to deal with economic saboteurs. The future will show to what extent these decisions will end the economic disorder. Along with these firm decisions, one must never forget about planning to guide capital into production.

If the market is chaotic, it cannot be a logical basis for any economic activity. The prices for coins and reputable foreign currencies are increasing significantly without any acceptable reason. The fluctuations in the foreign exchange and coin market in the last few days were at times so rapid that daily changes gave way to hourly and even momentary changes. On some days the rapid changes in the market reached such a level that profiteers were the only buyers, and the fear of increased prices kept them from selling coins and foreign exchange.

Broker's Market and Hidden Hands

Who really controls the twisting and turning broker's market?

The people are asking, why was the government's role in last month's fast market for coins and foreign exchange so limited? The people are saying that in most cases the government's measures were too fast or delayed. It seems that the government's role was passive, following the broker's market. Insiders believe that the method of distributing coins by the government, and especially the set price for each coin, has a great effect on the acceleration of coin price increases on the free market. This government, whose goal was to collect currency in circulation, was unable to bring order to the chaotic market. Most important of all, the coins distributed in the market heated up the broker's market more than ever.

In the area of foreign exchange, the government adopted a tighter policy. The government's main methods of adjusting the foreign exchange market were the imposition of limitations on the sale of foreign exchange and giving foreign exchange only to passengers definitely intending to leave the country. Despite this, the foreign exchange market is still in the hands of open and secret profiteers.

According to the experts, the open agents in the foreign exchange market are generally small-time individuals. These individuals get revenue from the daily fluctuations on the foreign exchange market compared to the capital that has been used. The real operators in the foreign exchange market, however, are the hidden agents. These individuals pull hidden market strings where trade volume is significant.

These profiteers, who are the main owners of the loose capital, work together in an undeclared union to manipulate the market for every kind of merchandise they wish to control, and they shape market conditions just as they wish. The principal foreign exchange smugglers are to be found among these individuals. Much of the nation's capital has been plundered by these individuals and has turned up in other countries. For them, the type of merchandise is not that important. Therefore their range of operation extends from dollars and coins to narcotics.

With a passing familiarity with our nation's secret trade market, you will not be that astonished by the motion made by several Majles deputies to execute people who sell at high prices. It will take a vigorous and organized approach to deal with those who have gotten such power that in an instant they can bring rapid fluctuations to the foreign exchange and coin markets, and following that the market for all the goods the public needs.

When the urgent motion by 120 Majles deputies to fight economic saboteurs to the point of executing them was presented as a campaign against selling at high prices, its importance was greatly diminished.

Many believe that the person who sells at high prices is someone who sells what the public needs at prices higher than the designated rates at both the wholesale and retail levels. Yet when distributors buy goods at prices higher than the designated rates, clearly their selling price will also be higher. Therefore, a vigorous campaign against distributors, especially small merchants, does not appear that logical.

Rather, the intent of the motion by the Majles deputies to fight selling at high prices to the extent of execution is to fight tooth and nail against the major hidden agents behind the scenes in the nation's black market. According to the experts, however, the fear is that this

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campaign will change course at the beginning or midway and will be directed only at the small distributors.

Inappropriate Policies and Increased Currency in Circulation

Many economic experts believe that the roots of the increase in currency in circulation and loose capital are to be found in the implementation of certain inappropriate economic policies. They believe that these kinds of policies not only failed to improve the nation's monetary and financial markets, their only result was to increase currency in circulation. Dr. Bahman Arman, one of our country's economic analysts, said in this regard:

There are few countries to be found in the world that use monetary tools to obtain monetary resources for the government. These kinds of measures are taken only in countries that are in economic crisis.

Yet Iran's past shows that with the exception of certain times during the war, Iran was not in circumstances that could be considered critical. Governments alone have the right to publish currency notes. The use of this monopoly right must be done to such an extent that a country's economy will not be disrupted. There are many countries to be found in the world that are among the world's most indebted, but the rate of inflation in those countries is reasonable.

One may ask, why in Iran, where the government's indebtedness compared to its GNP is not comparable to those countries, are the rate of inflation and the amount of currency in circulation so high?

Before answering this question, it is better to consider why the government is one of the biggest borrowers on the nation's financial market. Much has been said concerning this, and the basic reason is the excessive size of government organizations.

Government intervention in the economy has spread to the point that even the smallest and simplest industrial products are produced by companies affiliated with the government. For example even the production of napkins and tomato ketchup is done by companies affiliated with the government, when the private sector or the public could produce such products. The large size of the government organizations and their daily increasing needs have increased the demand for financial resources.

On the other hand, the failure to employ appropriate financial and monetary policies has created conditions where currency in circulation in the system has sharply increased. Since government organizations cannot be self-sufficient, they are forced to turn to the government. Because they are government operations and are not managed well, they therefore turn their financial shortages over to the government. The government in turn, because of its limited revenues, prints currency notes since it is the only organization that has a monopoly on the printing of currency notes.

There are other countries where the government sector is large and has a budget deficit, but they do not impose a high inflation rate on the public, and useless currency in circulation does not exist in such countries to the extent that it does in ours. Why does it not exist? This is the big question. Why does such a thing not happen in these countries, while it happens here? The main reason is that those governments use appropriate financial tools to meet the government's financial needs.

To be continued....

Prices for Variety of Products 15-28 Feb

Household Goods

95LA0201A Tehran RESALAT (Supplement) in Persian 15 Feb 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—In the last few months the rates for various household goods have seen major increases. Most sellers mentioned the increase in the prices for domestic factory products, the increase in the foreign exchange rate, and the reduction in imports as the major reasons for the increases in the prices for household goods.

The Market Regulation Program Support Staff has decided that as of next year [21 March 1995-20 March 1996] household products and supplies will be subject to pricing. In this regard RESALAT's economic affairs correspondent sought the views of some sellers of some household supplies, which you will read as follows:

Abol-Qasemi, a seller of household goods located at the Jomhuri intersection, said: If the goal is to stop the constant price fluctuations and increases by domestic factories, this is not bad. If, however, prices are imposed and this leads to a shortage of goods on the market, there will be no benefit.

Amir Hoseyn Khosravi, one of the sellers of household goods at the Jomhuri intersection, discussed the increases in the prices of these products over the last few months made by the domestic factories. He said: For example, in the last two months the Alish Gas Company increased its gas rate from 420,000 to 670,000 rials.

He discussed the pricing of household goods. He said: If in this regard producers are required to adhere to prices and not to make false price increase, it will be effective in regulating prices.

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Khosravi also added: Currently importing household goods is difficult, and this has a great effect on price increases.

Laylazi, another seller at the Jomhuri intersection, said: If the pricing of household products is done on a six-month or a one-year basis and if the price fluctuations and changes are stopped during this period, it will be useful.

Mohammad Reza Ne'mati, a seller of household goods, said: It is not possible to set prices on household goods because of the fluctuations of the prices of raw materials. Of course if this can be controlled it is appropriate.

With reference to
added: For example, the price of a Taknu gas stove was 270,000 rials in the month of Ordibehesht this year [21 April-21 May 1994]. Due to increases in the prices of raw materials, the price has now increased to 620,000 rials.

In this regard Ne'mati emphasizes the need to prevent unsound competition between producing factories. He said: When one factory decides to increase the prices for its products, the other factories and producing units will also increase their prices.

He emphasized: Factories must be required to sell their products based on the finished cost of production and a reasonable profit; they should not be allowed to follow the market with price increases.

Reza Qolinezhad, another seller at the Jomhuri intersection, said: With reductions in the taxes and various fees that now exist, production would be in a favorable situation and merchants and guilds would also market their products at a low price. Then there would be no need for imposed pricing.

He added: Currently, importing is difficult and done at the minimum possible levels, yet production at domestic factories is not enough to meet society's needs.

At the same time, our correspondent reports from the Amin Hozur three-way intersection, the center for the sale of various types of household supplies, that the prices for various types of household products have increased about 20 percent since last month, and in this regard the prices of recording and camera equipment increased faster than those of other goods.

The same report adds: With the beginning of the blessed month of Ramadan, there was a slight decrease in the prices of household goods, including recording and camera equipment, like televisions, so that the price of a Model 2192 Sony color television, which was 2.25 million rials about two weeks ago decreased recently to 2.05 million rials, while the price of a Sony 1435 color television decreased from 1.02 million to 980,000 rials.

In the same regard the person in charge of a store selling household goods discussed the psychological effects of the increased prices of goods. He said: Although the prices of household goods have decreased somewhat in recent days, current prices are still higher than they were early last month.

With regard to the pricing of household goods, he added: This project that has been implemented concerning goods has not been that successful, and it cannot have significant positive effects with regard to household goods.

Mohammadi, another seller of household goods, said: Since the costs of production are regularly increasing, as a consequence the producers increase the prices of their products; this in turn causes increases in market prices.

He discussed the pricing of household goods. He added: The pricing project will be implemented for these goods when they become scarce on the market; in reality it will not be possible to set prices on household goods.

The person in charge of the Safa household goods store at the Amin Hozur intersection also said: The main reason for the increases in the prices of household goods is the increases in the prices of the products from domestic factories. They unilaterally write the sale contracts with buyers so that if the prices for goods increase by the time the goods are delivered, they will collect the current price from buyers.

He added: As long as supply is not equal to demand, the current problems will exist in the market for household goods. Therefore, the pricing of goods cannot begin at the level of the stores; this task must be undertaken at the start of production.

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Prices for Various Household Goods on the Tehran Market (in rials)

PRODUCT	AMIN HOZUR Intersection	JOMHURI Market
Pars Freezer	1 million	1.05 million
Pars 12-ft Refrigerator	910,000	950,000
2-Door 12-ft Azmayesh Refrig.	950,000	
Hoover 13-ft Refrig.	800,000	830,000
Movaled 11-ft Refrig.	700,000	700,000
Arj 7-ft Refrig.	580,000	
Tanku 4-Flame Gas Stove		2.5 million
5-Flame		3.3 million
Andi Freezer		2.35-2.42 million
Indazite Freezer		1.59-1.7 million
Tehran Lo'ab 6-Flame Stove (steel model)	740,000	
Tehran Lo'ab 5-Flame Stove	700,000	
Puyan 5-Flame Stove with Cabinet	142,000	
Javaherian Gas Stove	120,000	
Enerzhi Industrial Stove	720,000	
Kard Model Enerzhi Stove	384,000	
Mashhad Kuler Gas Stove-Model 800	180,000	
Mashhad Kuler Gas Stove-Model 1000	220,000	
Sangarkar Gas Stove	160,000	
Zarif Gas Stove	170,000	172,000
Ali Nesb Kerosene Stove	68,000	
Atra Kerosene Stove (Model 2000)	63,000	
Arj 50-Gal Water Heater	470,000	
Azmun Water Heater	420,000	
Tala-ye Abi Water Heater	390,000	
Puyan 15-liter Water Heater	310,000	
Iran Khorshid 60-gal Water Heater	410,000	
Iran Khorshid 50-gal Water Heater	400,000	
Sepehr 60-gal Electronic Water Heater	440,000	
Sony Model 2192 Color TV	2.05 million	2.05 million
Panasonic 3185 Color TV	1.9 million	1.92 million
NAC TV (Payam)	1.27 million	
Shahab 21-inch TV	1.2 million	1.15 million
Sanam 21-in TV	1.2 million	

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Prices of Goods, Feb-May

PRODUCT	AMIN HOZUR Intersection	JOMHURI Market
Aiwa 14-in TV	850,000	860,000
Pars 14-in TV	820,000	
Sony 1435 TV	980,000	
Iranian Grundig 15-in TV	820,000	
Pars Black/White 14-in TV	215,000	215,000
Palan Electric Samovar	100,000	
7-Layer Teflon Food Warmer (Pars Khazar)	75,000	77,000
Niku Meat Mincer	255,000	
National Japan Meat Mincer (G-20)	325,000	
Autonational	420,000	450,000
Auto AIG Model 540	130,000	
Auto AIG Model 530	140,000	
Atlas 25-in Color TV		1.77 million
Grundig 28-in Color TV		2 million
Black/White Pars 12-in TV	250,000	
Panasonic 2-Cassette Radio/Recorder	300,000	300,000
Sony Model 435 Radio/Recorder	325,000	
Iran Pakshuma Washing Machine	165,000	
Iranshuma Washing Machine	170,000	
Iranshuma Washing Machine Large Model	240,000	
AIG Model 508 Washing Machine	2.15 million	2.1 million
Chinese National Electric Sweeper	360,000	
AIG Model 720 Electric Sweeper	650,000	645,000
AIG Model 730 Electric Sweeper	680,000	
Radastar Radio Transmitter		300,000
Nik Kala Gas Stove		208,000
Sitger Gas Stove		917,500
Tanku 5-Flame Gas Stove		620,000
Enameled Padisan Gas Stove (5-Flame)		860,000
Filur 13-ft Refrig.		780,000
Sepehr Electric Gas Stove		200,000
Ardel 4-Flame Gas Stove with Range		370,000
Kian 4-Flame Gas Stove		420,000
Single-Timer Indazite Washing Machine		1.75 million
Double-Timer Indazite Washing Machine		1.85 million

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Prices at Mowlavi Market

95LA0201B Tehran RESALAT (SUPPLEMENT) in Persian 15 Feb 95 p 16

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—Retail prices increased this week for some food and food products such as mutton, poultry, and grain. Meanwhile some basic goods such as vegetable shortening, sugar, and butter are still scarce.

RESALAT's economic affairs correspondent reports that last week, with the limited distribution of vegetable shortening, its price decreased slightly on the free market so that 4.5-kg tins of vegetable shortening are now being sold by brokers for 21,000 rials.

Based on the same report, currently only a small number of guild units distributing food products are marketing their goods with price stickers. Some sellers mention the constant price fluctuations as the reason for not applying the stickers.

One seller, with reference to the shortage of cube sugar on the market, said: One factory producing sugar cubes sells them for 1,220 rials per kg, but the receipt shows the approved price (1,160), and because of this the guild units do not want to buy and distribute the sugar cubes.

Retail Prices of Some Food Items at Tehran's Mowlavi Market (in rials)

Fresh Mutton (per kg)—650

Chicken (per kg)—3,750
Eggs (per carton)—3,400
Sugar—not found
Vegetable Shortening—not found
Liquid Vegetable Oil (3 kg cans)—4,700
Head Sugar—scarce
Sugar Cubes—scarce
Garbanzo Beans (per kg)—2,700
Small Red Beans (per kg)—1,900
Split Peas (per kg)—2,700
Lentils (per kg)—2,400
Chiti Beans (per kg)—2,400
Navy Beans (per kg)—2,100
Bahareh Tea (per package)—1,900
Shahrzad Tea (per package)—1,750
Khoshab Tomato Paste (1 kg can)—2,300
American Rice (per kg)—2,100
Iranian Rice (per kg, average)—2,400
Pakistani Rice (per kg)—1,300
Black-Eye Peas (per kg)—1,900
Broad Beans (per kg)—1,300
Dates (1 kg packages)—3,200
White Fish (per kg)—7,000
Gray Mullet (per kg)—3,800
Carp (per kg)—1,800 to 2,500
Large Salmon (per kg)—2,900
Shurideh [not further identified] fish (per kg)—5,500
Sarkhu [not further identified] fish (per kg)—1,800
Rockhead Fish (per kg)—4,800
Macaroni (per package)—650
Iranian Cheese (average price per kg)—4,400
Butter—scarce
Foreign Butter (per half kg package)—2,125
Soup Noodles (per package)—360

Vitamins

95LA0201C Tehran RESALAT (SUPPLEMENT) in Persian 16 Feb 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—Rates on several products were announced by the Producer and Consumer Protection Organization.

The Public Relations Office of the Ministry of Commerce reports that the prices on the company's vitamin products in propelyne packages at the factory door are as follows:

Vitamin E supplements in 11-gram [g] containers are 830 rials [R] per kg.

Vitamin A supplements in 15-g containers are 1,400 per kg.
Vitamin K supplements in 10-g containers are 910 per kg.
Vitamin D supplements in 8-g containers are 470 per kg.
Vitamin B complex vitamin supplements are 4,300, and each 60 by 90 propelyne package is 432.

Based on the same report, 1 percent in municipal taxes will be added to the factory-door selling prices of the above items.

Imported Butter

95LA0201D Tehran RESALAT (SUPPLEMENT) in Persian 16 Feb 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—The Producer and Consumer Protection Organization has announced the list of prices for imported butter in 200-gram [g] packages, which will be distributed by the Iran Milk Industries Corporation.

The Public Relations Office of the Ministry of Commerce reports that 200-g cakes of pasteurized butter are being delivered to shopkeepers throughout the country at 1,170 rials, and they must sell them to consumers at 1,270 rials.

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Meats

95LA0201E Tehran RESALAT (SUPPLEMENT) in Persian 19 Feb 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—In recent weeks the prices for various types of red meat have risen significantly on the free market.

Based on the report from RESALAT's economic affairs correspondent from the meat market in Tehran, factors such as smuggling meat to neighboring countries, the shortages and high prices of the feed needed by livestock keepers, and the onset of winter are among the most important reasons for the meat price increases of recent weeks.

In the same regard, Majid Qasabzadeh, chief of the union of mutton sellers, told our correspondent: In addition to exports, a significant number of livestock are also being smuggled out of the country. In some cases it is even said that anyone wishing to export livestock may pay 40,000 rials per head to export sheep legally. Of course this has been going on for about seven or eight months.

In winter, since on the one hand moving livestock to the cities from the rural areas is difficult, and since on the other hand a significant quantity of the nation's livestock is exported, the former market supply has decreased while prices have risen sharply, as in the past.

He said: Another factor in the decreased production and marketing of meat in the country is the high cost and scarcity of the feed needed by livestock keepers. Very often for this very reason, livestock keepers often slaughter their stock much sooner than the usual time, and if this continues it will have undesirable effects on the nation's meat production.

For example, even now it is often seen that livestock keepers, because of the shortage of feed, sell lambs weighing 12-15 kg, yet ordinarily the weight of a lamb should be about 25 kg more before being sold or butchered.

He added: Another factor that has driven up the price of meat in recent months is the increased prices of the rationed meat the government distributes. The market supply of this type of meat has also decreased, and the ration coupons have even been cut off for many butcher shops. As a result, some 1,200 of Tehran's 3,000 butcher shops have been forced to close for two reasons: the price of meat has increased and public demand has consequently decreased; and rationed meat is not being delivered to shopkeepers.

In the same regard, Hoseyn Zandi, a butcher on Mowlavi Street, told our correspondent: Due to the increase in the price of feed, it is almost impossible economically for livestock keepers to engage in animal husbandry. For this reason, livestock keepers are not showing that much desire to keep livestock. This has led to a decline in meat production and, following that, an increase in the price.

He added: On the other hand, the increased cost of keeping livestock has meant that owners are taking their livestock to the slaughterhouse and slaughtering them much earlier than the accepted age. This has caused the rate of livestock breeding to decrease, and following that the production of meat has decreased.

He added: In addition to these things, existing inflation in the country has had its effects on the increasing price of meat; for example, the price of chicken, which is a substitute for red meat, has increased in recent months, and this has caused public demand for red meat to rise. The price of red meat has also increased as a result.

Continuing, Zandi said: Usually in winter, due to the decreased production of meat and the closure of some rural roads, the amount of meat marketed in the province centers decreases, and as a result of the decreased supply of meat, its price increases; this has also been a factor in the recent price increases.

He said: Although the meat price increases usually do happen in winter, the amount of the increase in the price of meat this winter was greater than in previous years.

Tavakol Hoseyni, a butcher on Baharestan Square, told our correspondent regarding this: Since the price of a kilogram of meat is higher in the countries neighboring Iran than it is inside the country—just as it is in the nations of the Persian Gulf littoral and in the countries neighboring Iran to the west—there has been widespread meat smuggling for some time by middlemen due to the greater profits. This problem has been acute enough to affect the domestic market.

In the same regard he said: There is more smuggling now of dark sheep than of the other types because their dark color makes it easier to get them out of the country.

He added: The scarcity and high cost of feed is another factor that has made it economically almost impossible for livestock keepers to keep and breed livestock. This factor has also played an effective role in reducing the supply of meat and making it more expensive.

On the other hand, the existence of unnecessary middlemen has also kept butchers from being able to get the meat they need directly from livestock keepers. Consequently, all these factors have come together to cause enormous increases in the cost of getting meat into the hands of the consumer.

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Reza'i, a butcher on Martyr Mostafa Khomeyni Street, also told our correspondent in this same regard: Usually every year in winter, and to some extent into the new year, the price of meat increases because of the reduced livestock supply, but this winter prices increased more than they have in previous years.

For example, butchers now pay R4,200 per kg for live meat. After removing the waste and skin, they sell the mutton to the consumer for 6,200 rials per kg with the fat and for 7,000 rials without the fat.

Hoseyni, a butcher at Ibn Sina Square, also discussed the problem of meat smuggling: He said: Most smuggled meat usually goes into Saudi Arabia and Turkey because the price of livestock and meat in these countries is quite high. This problem, along with the cold weather in the winter, has caused the price of meat to increase more this year than it did in previous years.

Prices of Meat at Mowlavi Intersection (Tehran, rials per kg)

Mutton without Fat (thigh)—6,500

Mutton without Fat—5,800
Mutton Mixed with Fat—4,800
Veal without Bones or Fat—6,000
Veal with Bones and Fat—5,000
Mutton Filets—6,000
Veal Filets, Cleaned—7,000

Fruit, Vegetables

95LA0201F Tehran RESALAT (SUPPLEMENT) in Persian 19 Feb 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—The prices for chicken, various types of fruit, vegetables, and summer crops at the fruit and vegetable squares and at Tehran's Bazar-e Ruz were announced, effective as of today, until further notice.

Based on the report from the Public Relations Office of the Organization of Fruit and Vegetable Squares for Agricultural Produce:

High-grade Lebanese red apples — 800 rials

Unspotted French green apples — 650 rials
Up to 5 kg, northern Thompson apples — 850 rials per kg
Large northern sweet lemons — 350 rials per kg
Up to 5 kg, northern Rasmi oranges — 550 rials per kg
Up to 6 kg, northern Biruni oranges — 500 rials per kg
Hearty Onsho tangerines — 450 rials per kg
Large Mahali northern tangerines — 350 rials
Large southern Valencia oranges — 800 rials
Up to 6 kg, southern Thompson oranges — 1,200 rials
Southern oranges — 350 rials
Nosorkh crepe fruit is 350 rials
Shahrudi grapes — 900 rials
Up to 5 kg, large, quality bananas — 650 rials per kg
Up to 4 kg, hearty Esfahan quinces — 800 rials per kg
Large Rasmi southern tangerines — 550 rials
Clementines and tangelos — 650 rials
Large, quality onions — 300 rials
Large potatoes — 300 rials
Quality, thin cucumbers — 650 rials
Fresh quality Alpha red carrots — 450 rials
Cleaned Rasmi and salad lettuce — 350 rials
Aromatic and table vegetables — 300 rials
Soup and rice vegetables — 300 rials
Large stuffing peppers — 700 rials
Small peppers — 1,500 rials
Turnip cabbage and red cabbage — 350 rials
Quality cauliflower — 400 rials
Bandari eggplant and eggplant for stuffing — 550 rials
Sweet squash and jam squash — 450 rials
Garlic is 12,00 rials
Brussels sprouts and endive — 1,100 rials and
Small turnips — 350 rials per kg.

Based on this report, if citizens witness any kind, violation, they may report the incident to the supervising office, Bazar-e Ruz or the squ — in question, or they may call the Public Relations Office at 7526429.

Chicken

95LA0201G Tehran RESALAT (SUPPLEMENT) in Persian 22 Feb 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—The main reasons for the increases in chicken prices in recent days are the ban on bringing chicken into Tehran from other provinces, the requirement that units marketing chicken sell it in packages, the reduction in the number of slaughterhouses, and price increases at the producing units.

RESALAT's economic affairs correspondent reports that the selling prices of chicken at Tehran's major markets have increased in recent days.

An official at the Chicken Farmer's Union gave an interview to our correspondent in this regard. He said: Currently there is no problem of any kind with the production of chicken; we even have increased production. The lack of stability in chicken prices, however, causes them to go up and down from time to time. A serious solution to this must be found.

He also added: Even now there is no guarantee on the production prices of chicken or eggs. When this problem exists, prices always go up and down.

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He added: When the producer suffers losses at times because of the lack of a guarantee on poultry marketing, in the future he wants to recover that loss. Therefore the increased prices affect this issue.

The official said that in the days to come we will see a decrease in chicken prices. He said: Although this relative equilibrium is being established for the price of chicken, this is temporary and a solution must be found in the future so that we will not see increases in chicken prices.

In his report our correspondent adds: Fresh (unpacked) chicken is being sold on Sarcheshmeh and Mowlavi streets at 3,700-3,800 rials.

In an interview with our correspondent Ms. Akbarzadeh said: Two weeks ago the price of chicken at Mowlavi was 3,600 rials , but it has already reached 3,700 rials. What is the justification for this increase? My husband is a pensioner with a salary of 120,000 rials. How can we buy two chickens at 15,000 rials?

She also asked: How did the price of chicken go up 1,100 rials in two weeks?

Mahram Qolizadeh, a chicken merchant on Mowlavi street, discussed the reasons for the chicken price increases. He said: The market supply of chicken is already low, and chicken from the municipalities is being kept out of Tehran.

He also noted: The Office of Health Care ordered us to sell the chicken in plastic bags. It costs 200 rials per kg to do this, but the sale of chicken was already deregulated two days ago, and the price went up to 3,700.

Rahmati, another chicken merchant, said one reason for the chicken price increases on the market was stopping what used to be hundreds of tons of chicken coming into Tehran from the municipalities every day.

He said: In the past masses of chicken poured into Tehran from the provinces of Khorasan, Esfahan, and the provinces adjoining Tehran, and there was no problem. When this was stopped, however, the price increases appeared.

Rahmati said the only way to bring down the chicken prices is to permit chicken to come into Tehran freely from the municipalities and to restart the traditional chicken slaughterhouses. He said: There are only 10 or 11 industrial slaughterhouses in the vicinity of Tehran, while in the past there were more than 50 or 60 traditional slaughterhouses, which they closed for sanitation reasons. Yet the situation at the industrial slaughterhouses is no better than that at the traditional slaughterhouses.

He also predicted that if these two things are done, the price of chicken will return to its previous levels or 2,400-2,600 rials.

Concerning the packaging of chicken, another chicken merchant said: In the last few days the Health Office ordered the slaughterhouses and chicken merchants to sell the chicken in packages. This both lowered the quality of the chicken and added to the consumer's cost. In my view, this had something to do with the increased price of chicken, and I think this price increase will hold for some time.

Based on the report from our correspondent, the current price of a carton of eggs is 3,500 rials, and the distributors say the reasons for this price increase is the increase in the price of chicken.

Consumer Items

95LA0201H Tehran RESALAT (SUPPLEMENT) in Persian 25 Feb 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran (IRNA)—The retail prices for eight consumer and food items increased on Thursday (4 Esfand [23 February]) compared to last Thursday (27 Bahman [16 February]), while the prices of 17 other items remained stable.

Based on the report from the city of Tehran, last week sugar, manual and automatic powdered laundry detergent, and half kilograms of tea were being sold at the approved price in the major stores and retail shops, while imported cheese, domestic butter, and sugar cubes were being sold on a limited basis in some retail shops.

Last week solid vegetable shortening was not to be found at the approved price in the major stores and retail shops; imported butter was being sold in some retail shops at 14,000 rials.

The same week Iranian rice increased 11.4 percent, garbanzo beans increased 11.1 percent, Iranian cheese increased 6 percent [as published; see table below], Thai rice increased 5.2 percent, chicken increased 5.1 percent, U.S. rice increased 4.7 percent, and chiti beans increased 4.3 percent.

The prices of 25 food and consumer items for last Thursday, 4 Esfand, compared to that of the previous Thursday are listed as follows:

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Price Comparisons

TYPE of PRODUCT	THURSDAY 27 BAHMAN	THURSDAY 4 ESFAND
Half-kg, Iranian Bahareh Tea	1,900	1,900
Red foreign tea, per kg	6,500	6,500
Chicken, per kg	3,900	4,100
Mutton, per kg	6,500	6,500
Beef, per kg	7,000	7,000
Iranian rice, per kg (average)	2,600	2,900
U.S. rice, per kg	2,100	2,200
Number 1 Thai rice, per kg	1,900	2,000
Head sugar, per kg	1,210	1,210
Sugar cubes, per kg	1,260	1,260
Sugar, per kg	1,100	1,100
Vegetable shortening, 4.5 kg		
Lentils, per kg	2,300	2,400
Chiti beans, per kg	2,300	2,300
Garbanzo beans, per kg	2,700	3,000
Split peas, per kg	2,700	3,000
Imported cheese, per kg	4,300	4,300
Iranian cheese, kg, average	5,300	5,000
Imported butter, per kg		14,000
Pasteurized butter, 100 grams		650
Number 1 tomato paste, per can	2,350	2,350
Number 2 tomato paste	2,100	2,100
Eggs, per carton	3,600	3,600
Manual detergent powder, 480 g	900	900
Machine detergent powder, 500 g	1,200	1,200

Week of Price Changes

95LA02011 Tehran RESALAT (SUPPLEMENT) in Persian 28 Feb 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—In the week ending 11/21/1373 [10 February] the prices of various types of rice, red meat, chicken, and grains increased.

Based on the weekly report from the Central Bank's Office of Economic Statistics concerning the average price of some food items at the retail level in Tehran in the week ending 11/21/1973, the prices of dairy products increased compared to those of the previous week. Because of the price set by the government, pasteurized butter was not to be found in the city's stores. Eggs were selling for 3,400-3,800 rials, a slight decrease in price.

In this week, the prices of dairy products increased 2.8-6.2 percent. The price of eggs dropped 1.1 percent.

In the week reported, the prices of various types of rice increased 1.8-11.2 percent, and the prices of various grain products increased 4.8-11.5 percent.

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In the fresh fruits group, the prices of yellow potatoes and yellow Lebanese eggs decreased 8.8 percent, the price of number-1 oranges increased 5 percent, and the price of tangerines increased 10.2 percent.

In the fresh vegetables group, the price of cucumbers increased 7.5 percent; the price of eggplant increased 9.3 percent; the price of green squash increased 37.5 percent; the price of potatoes increased 18 percent; the price of onions increased 11.9 percent; and the price of leafy vegetables increased 15.8 percent. The price changes for other fruits and vegetables were negligible.

In the week studied, the prices of various types of red meat went up 2.3-4.2 percent, and the price of chicken increased 6.4 percent.

During this week it was not possible to calculate the price of vegetable shortening in the city's stores because the price was not available. Sugar cubes were being sold at the official price, which decreased 0.9 percent. Tea and sugar were also being sold at the official price, and their prices remained stable.

***Prices for Household Goods Set for Mar-Sep**

95LA0196A Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 4 Apr 95 p 14

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Service — The prices for televisions, refrigerators, freezers, refrigerator-freezers, coolers, and 344 other items were set for the first six months of 1374 [21 March-22 September 1995].

Yesterday, in an interview with reporters, Minister of Industries Engineer Mohammad Reza Ne'matzadeh made this announcement and added: The prices of 349 items in 20 industrial categories have been determined for the first six months of this year, and the public will be informed of these goods through the media.

The minister of industries added: The decrease or increase in the price of these items in the second half of this year, which has also been announced to the factories, will depend on factors such as the rate of the dollar and other things.

He said: The prices of these goods were determined in the first few days of this year on the basis of criteria established in the Consumers and Producers Protection Organization by the experts of the Ministry of Industries and other industries of the country last Esfand [20 February-20 March 1994].

He said: Anyone who deviates from the determined prices will be considered a violator and will be dealt with according to the law. Consumer awareness of the prices will certainly contribute to these prices being scrutinized at all levels.

The minister of industries provided reporters with the names of the priced items. Televisions, refrigerators, freezers, refrigerator-freezers, coolers, meat grinders, fruit juicers, fans, various kinds of cables, pane glass, light bulbs, welding electrodes, washing machines, motor oil, car batteries, spark plugs, tobacco products, various kinds of carbonated beverages, dishwashing liquid, sanitary soap, and tissue paper are among the goods that have been priced.

To inform the producers of the distribution network and consumers, he referred to the procedures for determining the prices and added: The criteria and points that were observed in pricing are the criteria established by the Consumer and Producers Protection Organization, but in order to prevent more price increases in this sector, more pressure has been put on the industries.

The minister of industries said: The prices were determined on the basis of the open market foreign currency and foreign currency obtained from exports. Considering that at the present time these units have raw materials and partially manufactured and other products in the warehouses, especially for imported items, the average rate of foreign currency was used.

Ne'matzadeh added: For that group of products facing a shortage of raw materials and requiring new imports in the first six months of this year, today's foreign currency rate will be used.

According to him, the increase in the price of foreign currency in the past months is not the reason for higher prices for goods because much of the raw materials were procured earlier; only the deficit was calculated at the day's rate.

He emphasized the widespread distribution of goods and added: The production units must engage in the distribution of their products through licensed agencies and a widespread distribution system throughout the country, and they should avoid monopoly in the sale and distribution of goods because this is contrary to the decisions of the Support Headquarters of the Market Regulation Plan.

Ne'matzadeh said: Considering the 20-percent increase in wages for factory workers based on the decision of the Supreme Council of Labor, the effect of this wage increase on the final price of the products is about 4 or 5 percent, and on some goods it is 3 percent. This has also been taken into consideration in setting the prices.

The minister of industries said: Since the price of fuel and energy has also increased within the framework of

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Note 19 of the Second Plan, this rate increase also has a slight effect on the cost of products, which, of course, varies depending on the kind of industry and product.

According to him, the increase in the price of fuel effects final costs in the machine-building industries at about 0.5-1.0 percent, in chemical industries at about 3 percent, and in non-metal mineral industries at about 5 percent.

He asked all the production units that are not subject to this pricing to observe this important matter themselves and not contribute to price increases.

Ministry of Industries Sets the Prices of 349 Products of Units Under Its Control

According to a report by the Public Relations Office of the President, Industries Minister Eng. Mohammad Reza Ne'matzadeh made this announcement yesterday in the meeting of the Support Headquarters of the Market Regulation Plan in a report on the steps by this ministry to set the prices of the products of 75 major production units, including 20 groups and 349 items, and added: The prices have been determined on the basis of the components and factors that affect prices in order to support the consumers and provide the possibility for the continuation and increase of domestic production, while considering fair profit for the production units and the distribution network in the first half of this year.

Based on the ratification of the Market Regulation Headquarters, the Ministry of Industries will soon provide the press and the Voice and Vision with a list of the set prices. Producers were made responsible for including the price on their products and publishing the set prices for the public.

In conclusion, this headquarters emphasized: Any sort of violation of ratified prices observed by the headquarters will be subject to government punishment.

In the continuation of this session, the results of the public poll concerning the creation of the Refah Chain Stores were examined.

Based on this poll, 88 percent of the respondents supported the implementation of this plan on the government agenda for the purpose of regulating the market and reforming the distribution situation.

Based on the ratification of the Support Headquarters of the Market Regulation Plan, all production units, including government and non-government factories, are responsible for placing a percentage of their produced goods at the disposal of the Refah Chain Stores based on the policies of the Ministries of Commerce and Industries at the determined prices.

Also, the Tehran City Hall presented a report on the situation of the sales of and the people's visits to the first Refah Chain Store and also the progress of the work on the stores being built by City Hall. The decision was made that City Hall should take steps to expedite the operation of other Refah Chain Stores.

Chart of Rial Prices Set for Dozens of Household and Electrical Items

NAME OF GOODS	FACTORY PRICE	WHOLESALE PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
6-ft Azmayesh refrigerator	481,000	495,000	530,000
8-ft Azmayesh refrig.	526,00	542,000	580,000
10-ft Azmayesh refrig.	620,000	639,000	684,000
12-ft Azmayesh refrig.	720,000	742,000	794,000
6-ft Azmayesh freezer	660,000	680,000	728,000
10-ft Azmayesh freez.	780,000	803,000	859,000
12-ft Azmayesh refrig.-freez.	870,000	896,000	959,000
Azmayesh model 2001 washing machine	900,000	927,000	992,000
Azmayesh model 2003 wash. mach.	990,000	1.02 million	1.09 million
Azmayesh portable cooler	154,000	159,000	170,000

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NAME OF GOODS	FACTORY PRICE	WHOLESALE PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
Azmayesh models 3000, 3500 coolers	318,000	327,000	350,000
Azmayesh models 4000, 4500 coolers	382,000	393,000	420,000
Azmayesh model 5000 cooler	417,000	430,000	460,000
Azmayesh model 6500 cooler	445,000	458,000	490,000
7-ft Arj refrig.	560,000	577,000	617,000
10-ft Arj refrig.	670,000	690,000	738,000
12-ft Arj refrig.	770,000	793,000	849,000
10-ft Arj freez.	830,000	855,000	915,000
15-ft Arj refrig.-freez.	1.09 million	1.123 million	1.2 million
Arj Model 4224 wash. mach.	1.2 million	1.263 million	1.32 million
Arj portable cooler	182,000	187,000	200,000
Arj models 3000, 3500 coolers	318,000	327,000	350,000
Arj models 4000, 4500 coolers	382,000	893,000	420,000
Arj model 500 cooler	417,000	430,000	460,000
Arj model 700 cooler	481,000	495,000	530,000
Bahman 13-ft refrig.	885,000	912,000	976,000
Pars Machine 10-ft refrig.	570,000	587,000	628,000
Pars Machine 10-ft freez.	750,000	773,000	827,000
General 14-ft refrig.	800,000	824,000	882,000
General models 3000, 3500 coolers	318,000	327,000	350,000
General models 4000, 4500 coolers	382,000	392,000	420,000
Dilman model 5000 cooler	417,000	430,000	460,000
Sepehr Electric models 3000, 3500 coolers	318,000	327,000	350,000
Sepehr Electric models 4000, 4500 coolers	382,000	393,000	420,000
Sepehr Electric model 6500 cooler	445,000	458,000	490,000
Pars Household Appliances 12-ft refrigerator	820,000	845,000	904,000
Pars Household Appliances 12-ft freezer	920,000	948,000	1.014 million
Lorestan Co. 13-ft refrig.	720,000	742,000	794,000
Lorestan Co. 12-ft freez.	800,000	824,000	882,000
Movalled Co. 9-ft refrig.	620,000	639,000	684,000
Movalled Co. 12-ft refrig.	750,000	773,000	827,000

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NAME OF GOODS	FACTORY PRICE	WHOLESALE PRICE	RETAIL PRICE
Muler Co. models 3000, 3500 coolers	318,000	327,000	385,000
Muler Co. models 4000, 4500 coolers	382,000	393,000	420,000
Muler Co. model 345 vacuum cleaner	380,000	391,000	418,000
Muler Co. model 350 vacuum cleaner	420,000	433,000	463,000
Beler Co. 21-in. color TV	1 million	1.03 million	1.1 million
Pars Electric 14-in. black/white TV	225,000	236,000	260,000
Pars Electric 14-in. color TV	770,000	793,000	850,000
Pars Electric 15-in. color TV	800,000	824,000	880,000
Pars Electric 21-in. color TV	1.2 million	1.236 million	1.32 million
Pars Electric 28-in. color TV	1.85 million	1.906 million	2.04 million
Payam Co. 21-in. color TV	1.1 million	1.132 million	1.21 million
Jaddeh-ye Abrisham Co. 21-in. color TV	1.05 million	1.08 million	1.15 million
Radio Shahab Co. 14-in. black/white TV	200,000	210,000	230,000
Radio Shahab Co. 14-in. color TV	700,000	720,000	770,000
Radio Shahab Co. 21-in. color TV	1.1 million	1.132 million	1.21 million
Radio Shahab Co. 28-in. color TV	1.68 million	1.73 million	1.85 million
Radio Electric Co. 21-in. color TV	1 million	1.03 million	1.11 million
Shahid Shahabadi Co. model Sanam 21-in. color TV	1.1 million	1.132 million	1.21 million
Iran Electronic Industries Co. model Shiraz 21-in. color TV	1.1 million	1.132 million	1.21 million
Kufard Co. model Shiraz color TV	952,000	981,000	1.05 million

Prices for Various Household Products

95LA0211B Tehran RESALAT in Persian 5 Apr 95 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—New prices have been announced by the Producer and Consumer Protection Organization on various types of vegetable shortening and iron beams.

Our correspondent reports that these prices went into effect as of yesterday at all production and distribution units. They are as follows:

Solid and liquid vegetable shortening, 4.5 kg cans—11,500 rials [R];
17-kg cans of vegetable shortening—R41,610;
bulk vegetable shortening (per kg)—R2,500;
one bottle of Ladan vegetable shortening (1.3 kg)—R3,740;
one 810-gram [g] bottle of Ladan sunflower oil—R2,320;
3.5 and 3.6 kg cans of liquid or solid vegetable shortening—R9,070;
1.8 kg—R4,610;,

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900 g—R2,320;
2 kg—R7,670;
one 4-liter can of sunflower oil—R6,910;
one 2.15 kg can of sunflower oil—R8,060

Based on the same report, the cost of shipping anywhere in the country was included in the prices.

Likewise the factory door selling prices per kg of various types of iron beams and rods were as follows:

Rods—R6,500;
pipe—R7,380;
rough sheet metal—R6,300;
number 13, 14, 16, and 18 iron beams—R646;
number 4, 5, 5.5, and 6 angle iron—R572;
plain A1 rods at diameters 8 and 10—R865;
plain rods at diameter 12—R745;
diameter 14—R650;
diameter 16—R625;
diameter 18—R600;
diameter 20, 22, and 25—R580;
diameter 28, 30, and 32—R635;
number 14 and 16 drain pipe—R646

This report adds: The price of various types of rough A2 rods is 14 percent more than the price of plain A1 rods.

Likewise the price of various types of A3 rods is 20 percent more than the price of plain A1 rods.

The report states: The percentages of cost and profit on wholesale and retail prices compared to the purchase price on the factory invoice at 2 and 7 percent respectively, the cost of shipping to the municipalities, and all the legal and authorized taxes, will be added to the above prices.

Based on the same report, consumer prices will be set and announced by the general commerce offices in the provinces based on the above prices plus shipping and other real expenses and distribution factors.

Approved Prices for Other Goods (Unit: Rial)

Item	Consumer Price
Model 1000 meat grinder, Pars Khazar Co.	276,000
Model 1200 meat grinder, Pars Khazar Co.	375,000
Model 104 electric sweeper, Pars Khazar Co.	380,000
Model 204 electric sweeper, Pars Khazar Co.	430,000
Model 3010 electric fan, Pars Khazar Co.	100,000
Model 4020 electric fan, Pars Khazar Co.	105,000
Model 2010 electric fan, Pars Khazar Co.	114,000
Model 2020 electric fan, Pars Khazar Co.	125,000
Model 2030 electric fan, Pars Khazar Co.	130,000
Model 500 meat grinder, Niku Co.	259,000
Fruit juicer, with grinder and mixer, Niku Co.	243,000
Plain 40-watt bulb, various producers	900
Plain 60-watt bulb, var. producers	950
Plain 100-watt bulb, var. producers	1,000
Plain 150-watt bulb, var. producers	1,500
Plain 200-watt bulb, var. producers	1,700
Matt 40-watt bulb, var. producers	950
Matt 60-watt bulb, var. producers	1,000
Matt 100-watt bulb, var. producers	1,050

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Item	Consumer Price
Plain 40-watt bulb, candle type, var. producers	1,000
Plain 60-watt bulb, candle type, var. producers	1,050
Matt 40-watt bulb, candle type, var. producers	1,050
Matt 60-watt bulb, candle type, var. producers	1,100
36- and 40-watt florescent bulb, var. producers	4,500
18- and 20-watt florescent bulb, var. producers	4,000
Plain 40-watt florescent bulb, var. producers	4,800
Plain 100-watt florescent bulb, var. producers	4,200
2-mm glass, not cut or installed, per square meter	3,470
3-mm glass, not cut or installed, per square meter	4,100
4-mm glass, not cut or installed, per square meter	5,400
5-mm glass, not cut or installed, per square meter	2,370 [as published]
6-mm glass, not cut or installed, per square meter	9,360
8-mm glass, not cut or installed, per square meter	13,000
10-mm glass, not cut or installed, per square meter	14,970
Various types of common electrodes, Ama Industrial Co., per kg	3,900
Various types of common electrodes, other producers, per kg	3,950
Auto headlights, Iran Auto Parts Co.	2,900
Construction paint, 4 kg, all producers	22,000
Oil-based construction paint, per kg, all producers	8,200
Tissue paper, 200 sheets, all producers	1,000
Tissue paper, 300 sheets, all producers	1,500
Beverage with domestic syrup	170
Beverage with foreign syrup	200

Mid-April Prices for Food, Other Goods

95LA0227B Tehran RESALAT in Persian 15 Apr 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] **Tehran, IRNA—The retail prices of seven consumer and food items increased on Thursday, 24 Farvardin [13 April], and the price of 20 items remained stable.**

This report from the city of Tehran indicates that sugar cubes and hand and machine powdered detergent in the large and small retail stores were sold at the approved price.

This week, shortening, sugar, imported cheese, and domestic butter were not available in retail stores.

The price of low-grade tomato paste increased by 8.6 percent, premium-grade tomato paste by 5.7 percent, chick peas and split peas by 5.2 percent, lentils and kidney beans by 3.5 percent, and Iranian rice by 3.1 percent.

The retail price of 27 food and consumer items on Thursday, 24 Farvardin, compared with prices last Thursday, are as follows:

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Price Comparisons

Kind of Goods	17 Farvardin [6 April]	24 Farvardin [13 April]	Changes
Iranian Bahreh tea, half kilogram [kg]	1,900 rials [R]	R1,900	
Foreign red tea, half kg	R8,000	R8,000	
Chicken, per kg	R4,400	R4,400	
Mutton, per kg	R7,500	R7,500	
Beef, per kg	R8,000	R8,000	
Standard Iranian rice, per kg	R3,200	R3,300	3.1 percent
American rice, per kg	R2,400	R2,400	
Thailand rice, per kg	R2,200	R2,200	
Cone sugar, per kg	R1,200	R1,200 approved	
Sugar cubes, per kg	R1,260	R1,260	
Sugar, per kg	R10,500 [as published]	R1,050	
Lentils, per kg	R2,800	R2,900	3.5 percent
Kidney beans, per kg	R2,800	R2,900	3.5 percent
Chick peas, per kg	R3,800	R4,000	5.2 percent
Split peas, per kg	R3,800	R4,000	5.2 percent
Imported cheese, per kg	R4,240	R4,240 approved	
Iranian cheese, per kg	R5,600	R5,600	
Imported butter, per kg	R14,000	R14,000	
100-gram pasteurized butter	R640	R640 approved	
Premium-grade tomato paste, per can	R2,600	R2,750	5.7 percent
Low-grade tomato paste, per can	R2,300	R2,500	8.6percent
Eggs, per carton	R3,400	R3,400	
Powdered hand detergent, 500 grams	R1,200	R1,200	
Shiraz cigarettes, per package	R700	R700	
Zar cigarettes, per package	R650	R650	

Prices for Spare Parts, Motor Oil Increase

95LA0225A Tehran RESALAT in Persian 24 Apr 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] **Economic Affairs Division—In the past few months, the uncontrolled increase in the price of vehicles, the severe fluctuations in the price of foreign currency and gold coins, the lack of supply of automobile parts available on time and at the appropriate, ratified price by the production units, the existence of middlemen and speculation regarding these items, the restrictions on imports, and the lack of sufficient supervision over the distribution system of these goods have caused the price of vehicle spare parts to increase significantly.**

Mahmud Reza'i, owner of the Rughan Yadak Store located on Amir Kabir Street, said to our reporter

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concerning the reasons for the increase in the price of various kinds of motor oil, grease, and brake fluid compared to the last months of 1373 [21 March 1994-20 Marcn 1995]: Because we do not have ratified prices, the selling prices of domestic petroleum products that are mostly produced by the National Oil Company, Pars Oil, and Behran Oil have increased uncontrollably within the past few months by the middlemen and large distribution agents, so that the selling price of such products compared to those before the new year increased by about 25 percent on the whole.

He added: Presently, due to the export of some domestically produced motor oils to neighboring countries and the creation of shortages in the domestic market, the selling prices of these oils have increased. For example, the selling price of a four-liter container of Alvand motor oil of the National Oil Company has gone from 1,350 rials [R] to R5,000.

Pointing out that the "most important reason for the increase in the price of oil products is the increase in the price of fuel," Reza'i said: The companies producing oil products have not yet officially announced any price increase, but the merchants and middlemen who receive the goods from the production units have increased the price of goods regularly since before 1374 [21 March 1995-20 March 1996].

He added: About two months ago, the selling price of Aras four-liter motor oil (Pars Oil Company) increased from R7,200 to R11,000; one liter of Behran hydraulic oil from R2,860 to R4,500; Sanaco one kilogram [kg] grease from R17,500 to R23,500; and Peykan Filterman from R3,500 to R6,000.

Mohammad Nur'ali, the manager of a foreign spare parts store, pointing out that the "increase in the price of spare parts of foreign cars is directly related to the fluctuations in the rate of foreign currency because they are imported," said: In addition to the increase in the price of foreign currency in the past few months, the import restrictions on such goods have also caused their price to increase on the market.

He added: On the whole, the selling price of such items has increased several-fold compared to last Esfand. For example, the selling price of a full set of Chevrolet washers increased from R45,000 to R90,000 and piston rings for the same car from R80,000 or R90,000 to R200,000.

Another seller of foreign car spare parts on Amir Kabir Street in Tehran, who did not want his name mentioned, told our reporter regarding the rising prices of these items: If the free and unrestricted import of these parts is announced by the government, certainly the grounds for competition and decreased prices will be provided in the future.

In response to this question by our correspondent, "Has the increase in the price of fuel affected the increase in the price of vehicle spare parts?" he said: The increase in the price of fuel has not had much effect on the increase in the price of vehicle spare parts because the price of most of these parts increased prior to the increase of the price of fuel.

Another seller of spare parts also referred to the serious fluctuations in the price of foreign currency and coins in the market and told our reporter: The instability is related to the uncertainty regarding the purchase of these items from abroad.

He added: At the present, the import of certain spare parts, even calculating the price of every dollar at R5,000, is feasible. For example, the selling price of the French Peykan piston ring (deluxe flat piston) in this country is $9. Considering the present price of foreign currency in the market and the cost of transportation, it will cost R55,000. This ring, however, is sold at R100,000 on the domestic market.

Regarding the reasons for the increase in taxi fares, a taxi driver who introduced himself as Hamid said: Considering the increase in the cost of fuel and then the rapid increase in the price of automobile spare parts, it is not possible to keep transportation costs low. He said: In addition to these, the current expenditures of a family also have increased greatly compared to previous years and even compared to pre-1374.

Seyyed Ja'far Hoseyni, manager of the Nissan spare parts store in the Kashani shopping center, said to our reporter regarding the reasons for the increase in the price of automobile spare parts: The current production expenditures, such as water, electricity, salaries and wages of workers, and particularly needed raw materials for production that are mostly imported, has caused the increase in the cost of domestically manufactured products.

Pointing out, "I am myself a producer of Hyundai taxi back lights," he added: In manufacturing this product, the price of crystal, which is the major material used, was R4,000 per kg prior to 1374, but at the present time, the same material costs R8,000 per kg.

For this reason, we have raised the selling price of this product, which was R19,000 per pair, to R25,000.

He added: Crystal as a raw material is now produced by the petrochemical industries in the country, but due to exports it cannot fully meet the domestic needs.

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Pointing out that "on the whole, the selling price of all spare parts for vehicles has increased by about 50 percent compared to two months ago," Hoseyni said: In order to prevent price increases, the government must keep the foreign currency rate on the open market stable and prevent the devaluation of the rial in order to preserve the customer's purchasing power and bring the market out of recession.

Referring to the selling price of some spare parts in the market during Bahman [21 January-19 February] and Esfand [20 February-20 March] 1373, Hoseyni said: The selling price of each disk and clutch plate for Nissan in the past two months has increased from R160,000 to R300,000, the Peykan disk and clutch plate from R160,000 to R320,000, and Peykan shock absorbers from R25,000 to R55,000.

Criticizing the uncontrolled import of foreign cars into the country in the past year, he said: The cost of repair and maintenance of such cars is very high, and because all the spare parts are imported, a great deal of foreign currency leaves the country in this way.

He added: For example, at the present time the selling price of a pair of fiberglass front and rear bumpers for "Dovu" cars is R3 million on the market.

One of the tire sellers on Amir Kabir Street in Tehran, criticizing the method of distribution of tires by the production units, said: At the present, the share of tires delivered by the factories at the ratified price is insignificant compared to the great demand by consumers, and this has caused the store owners to ignore supplying the priced tires and to move toward foreign tires.

Stating that "on the average, the selling price of foreign tires has increased by 30-40 percent compared to a few months ago," he said: During the past few months, the selling price of 12x24 truck tires manufactured in Japan has increased from R1.8 million to R2.3 million. Presently, a pair of Peykan (Mega) tires on the market sells for R240,000-R350,000, and foreign tires for buses are R1.5 million a pair.

Riahi, a seller of spark plugs on Amir Kabir Street in Tehran, pointed out that "since the ratified price for this item has been set, so far the production units have avoided supplying it," and said: The Nur Spark Plug Factory is currently offering its products, contrary to the set price (R2,640 per spark plug), at R3,500 to the customers. In justifying their action, its officials say: "It is not feasible for the factory to sell it for less."

Stating that "one of the important factors in keeping the price of goods stable is to keep the price of foreign currency stable," he added: The increase in the price of fuel has not had much effect on the increase in the price of spare parts because most sellers purchased their needed goods prior to this increase last year.

An automobile repairman, in response to this question by our correspondent who asked, "For what reason has the price of car repairs increased?" said: Considering the daily increase in the price of most goods and necessities and the increase in the price of spare parts, the cost of services and repair has also increased to some degree.

A car brake shoe salesman on Amir Kabir Street in the "Peykan 136 Spare Parts Store" said: The price of brake shoes for domestic cars has not been raised by the production units compared to a few months ago, but the supply from these units compared to before has been limited, and this has caused an increase in the selling price of this item on the market.

Stating that "the increase in the selling price of some goods, such as brake shoes, is due to the psychological effect of other high prices," he added: When the price of an item increases for various reasons, consumers think that the selling price of other goods must also increase. Unfortunately, this kind of thinking has become quite common in the past few years among various salesmen.

Pointing out that "the valve factory has increased the selling price of its products on the whole by 60 percent compared to last year," he added: The selling price of Peykan brake shoes has increased from R2,800 last year to R3,620 now.

Wholesale Price Index Increases 42.4%

95LA0241K Tehran SALAM in Persian 9 May 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] News Service—During 1373 [21 March 1994-20 March 1995], the average wholesale price index for goods sold in Iran increased 42.4 percent compared to the average for 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994].

The Central Bank Office of Economic Statistics reports that in the month of Esfand 1373 [20 February-19 March 1995] the wholesale price index for goods sold in Iran reached 357.7, a 7.7 percent increase compared to the previous month. This figure increased 52.5 percent compared to the same month the previous year. The seasonally adjusted wholesale price index was 6.5 percent higher than the index for the previous month.

In the month of Esfand in the food group, the regions were 53 percent higher than the same indicator for 1372 [21 March 1993-20 March 1994]. Most of this increase was caused by the increased prices of rice, grains, and red meat.

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In the manufactured products group, the wholesale price index in Esfand 1373 increased 55.6 percent compared to the month of Esfand 1372.

Likewise based on this report, in the machinery and vehicles group the indicator in the month mentioned increased 51.2 percent compared to the same month in 1372.

Report on Price Fluctuation of Beans in Apr

95LA0227C Tehran RESALAT in Persian 18 Apr 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] **Economic Affairs Division—Due to the thriving of legume exports and the decrease in the supply of these items in the domestic market, since the beginning of the year, the prices of various legumes, such as chick peas, beans, lentils, mung beans, and split peas, have begun to increase.**

According to RESALAT's economic correspondent, a number of legume wholesalers in the Tehran bazaar made this announcement yesterday: The fact that most of the legumes produced are exported to neighboring countries, especially the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, has had a significant effect on the increase in the price of legumes in the domestic markets.

Karimian, one of the legume wholesalers in the Tehran market, said: In the past several weeks, a large amount of the legumes of the wholesalers of the Tehran market were exported to the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, Turkey, Pakistan, and the newly independent countries, such as Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. This in itself causes the fluctuation in the domestic prices of legumes.

Hedayat Haqqi, a Khorasar farmer who has come to Tehran to sell his legume crop, pointed out:

On the whole, the recent legume price fluctuations hinge on the exports because the government suddenly issues a permit to export certain legumes, and for this reason the domestic price changes drastically.

He continued: Because of the government policies regarding legumes, the prices are not always coordinated. Hence, legume farmers suffer losses. For example, last autumn, the legume farmers offered chick peas at 1,000 rials [R] per kilogram [kg] on the market, whereas now the farmers must pay R4,000 per kg for their chick pea seeds.

One of the legume retailers at the Mowlavi intersection said: Most of the profit that occurs when the prices increase on the market goes to the middlemen because as retailers we sell on the basis of the invoice with a maximum of a 5 percent increase; this 5 percent added to the price merely covers the transportation cost and losses due to weeding out bad products.

A consumer who had come to the market to purchase legumes said: Last week, the price of chick peas was R3,600 per kg, but today the price of the same product is about R4,000-R4,500.

Retail and Wholesale Prices of Legumes in the Tehran Market

	Retail Price (Unit Per Rial)		Wholesale Price
Legume	Last Week	This Week	This Week
Dried fava beans, per kg	100	1,200	1,050
Mung beans, per kg	650	700	600
White beans, per kg	2,000	2,200	2,000
Dried lime, per kg	5,000	6,000	5,500
Qom beans, per kg	1,700	1,800	1,700
Kidney beans, per kg	2,800	3,000	2,800
Red beans, per kg	1,700	1,800	1,700
Qalami [as published] beans, per kg	3,000	3,100	3,000
Chick peas, per kg	3,800	4,000	3,800
Split peas, per kg	4,200	4,500	4,300
Lentils, per kg	2,600	2,700	2,600

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New Prices Announced for Various Types of Pasta

95LA0238C Tehran RESALAT in Persian 25 Apr 95 p 11

[Interview with Reza Sa'idi, general manager of the National Pasta Guild Cooperative Company, by RESALAT; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] **Economic Affairs Division—The prices of various kinds of pasta were determined and announced on the basis of the coordination between the Ministries of Industries and Commerce.**

In an interview with the economic correspondent of RESALAT, Reza Sa'idi, the general manager of the National Pasta Guild Cooperative Company, announced the new prices set for pastas and in connection with the reasons for the increase in prices in recent days, said: The increase in the general cost, including the price of packaging equipment, salaries and wages of workers, and also the normal decrease in the production of factories due to the holidays at the beginning of the year are among the main reasons for the increase in the price of pasta.

He added: The new rates for pastas are set on the basis of the changes in the production costs in the past year.

Pointing out that the set rates on the whole are lower than the market prices, Sa'idi said: If the factories deviate from the announced rates, their quota of flour will stop and they will be reported to the government punishments organization.

The general manager of the pasta guild national cooperative company pointed out: The price labels for consumers and the net weight on the pasta packages as well as issuance of sales receipts by the production factories are mandatory.

He also put priority on providing for the needs of government, chain, and cooperative stores.

He also asked the citizens to call 880-8183 if they see any violations or problems in the distribution of pastas.

Retail Price of Pastas (Price in Rials)

Kind of goods	Factory price	Wholesale price	Consumer price
900-gram [gm] pasta, packaged in cellophane or plastic	617	636	700
900-gm pasta packaged in cellophane or plastic, with standard stamp	647	667	735
900-gm pasta packaged in tersiafon [as transliterated] and cartons	767	790	870
900-gm pasta packaged in tersiafon and cartons, with standard stamp	805	830	913
450-gm pasta packaged in cellophane or plastic	335	345	380
450-gm pasta packaged in cellophane or plastic, with standard stamp	351	362	399
450-gm pasta packaged in tersiafon or carton	424	437	480
450-gm pasta packaged in tersiafon or carton, with standard stamp	445	459	502

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Article on Price of Liquid Gas Increasing

95LA0238G Tehran RESALAT in Persian 26 Apr 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] **Economic Affairs Division—With the ratification of the Economic Council, the price of an 11 kg capsule of liquid gas increased from 500 rials [R] to R1,000.**

According to a report by the economic correspondent of RESALAT, an informed official said in this connection: Following the increase in the price of natural gas from R33 to R300 per capsule, the collection of this amount by the Ministry of Petroleum, and the increase in transportation costs as a result of the increase in the price of oil products, an increase of R200 per capsule has been created.

The manager of one of the liquid gas companies said: The major part of this increase will go to the Ministry of Petroleum, and a small portion will be placed at the disposal of the distributors.

In a communique sent to the newspaper, Esma'il Najjar, the director of the Public Relations Office of the National Iranian Liquid Gas Company, pointed out:

Considering the constant follow-up by the distribution companies, most of whom are in the private sector, and the continuation of the existing trend of the decrease in the quality of safety services in the liquid gas industry, the related organizations in charge, in determining the procedures for offering the distribution services for liquid gas, carried out continuous expert work over a period of six months. Ultimately the honorable Economic Council examined the proposal and determined the increase in the selling price of liquid gas delivered to consumers in various provinces by taking into consideration the distance between the consumer centers and the production and procurement points, with the consideration for the liquid gas consumer in various oppressed areas on the basis of provincial prices, and announced it to the office of the honorable governors general at the distribution companies for precise implementation.

He said: At the present time, the retail price of liquid gas throughout the province of Tehran is R1,000 per 11-kg cylinder, and its price at the stations is set at R950. He asked all liquid gas consumers to observe all safety precautions, to conserve in the use of this product, to purchase the liquid gas at the ratified price, and to report any sort of delay in delivery of liquid gas or failure to observe the set prices by calling the telephone numbers of the liquid gas distribution companies in the province of Tehran.

Esma'il Najjar emphasized: If the respected consumers do not receive the appropriate response or regular service from the distribution companies, they should contact the Complaint Department of the Iranian National Liquid Gas Company via phone at number 882-8151-3 and the provinces with the liquid gas distribution companies and the Iranian National Gas Company of the regions.

According to him, at this stage of pricing, special attention has been paid to the safety issues of liquid gas services in rebuilding and replacing the faucets and cylinders in circulation, and at the same time, the selling price of liquid gas to the distribution companies at the production points (refineries) has been modified with other petroleum products.

The director of the Public Relations Office of the Iranian National Liquid Gas Company said: Following the significant increase in the use of liquid gas at a scale of 13 kg per capita in 1356 [21 March 1977-20 March 1978] and 1357 [21 March 1978-20 March 1979] and more than 30 kg at the present, the natural gas distribution network has vastly expanded in the cities and liquid gas consumption has been directed toward villages. Considering the important issue that the use of liquid gas is very vital in preventing the destruction of forests and pastures and environmental pollution, and, on the other hand, the economic necessities in the form of service activities in this energy sector, given that it is a clean fuel with high heating value, we have been required to create a balance in the expenditures and revenues by offering services to prevent disruption in distribution.

Considering the ratification of the increase in prices, which has been on the agenda of the Economic Council from late this year, and while these prices were implemented from Farvardin [21 March-20 April], it is not clear why the related officials in the Plan and Budget Organization avoided any explanation, and it is said that they had also prevented others from offering any explanation regarding this increase.

Early this week, our correspondent contacted the office of Mr. Rowghani-Zanjani, the director of the Plan and Budget Organization and a member of the Economic Council and the Public Relations Office of this organization, as well as the office of the general manager of the National Liquid Gas Company and the Public Relations Office of the National Distribution and Refinery Company, to examine the reasons for this increase. Unfortunately, no explanation was provided to our correspondent, which ultimately resulted in very general explanations by the director of the Public Relations Office of the National Liquid Gas Company.

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